

WASHINGTON—This morning, Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) made remarks on the House Floor to honor the 99th anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and recognized Dr. Joan Duval-Flynn, President of the Media Chapter of the NAACP for her outstanding work and leadership in fighting for and protecting the civil rights of all Americans. — Included are remarks from Congressman Sestak’s speech this morning: “Madam Speaker, for nearly a century, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has been fighting for the civil rights and dignity of people of color. As a result of their efforts, our great nation today can boast of a society more diverse, productive, prosperous and hopeful than any in history.

However, today’s hope is a far cry from the violence, segregation and discrimination that inspired Mary White Ovington, William English Walling and Dr. Henry Moskowitz to meet in a little room of a New York apartment and commit the fledgling NAACP to the most important social movement in our national history. Today, the spirit of those brave and patriotic founders’ lives on in leaders like Dr. Joan Duval-Flynn, President of the Media, Pennsylvania NAACP Chapter. I rise today to congratulate Dr. Duval-Flynn for her vision, intelligence and dedication. She leads a chapter of the NAACP borne of a violent act in the early 1920’s and committed to making Delaware County, Pennsylvania a 21st century community where people of all colors and creeds live together as neighbors, friends and first class citizens.

In my first year representing the 7th District of Pennsylvania, the NAACP’s magazine, The Crisis, featured an article titled “Women Warriors, Female Combatants Sacrifice Lives for Country.” That article gave me cause to consider all of the extraordinary women and men of color I had the privilege of serving with during more than thirty years in our Armed Forces.

For that privilege and honor, I owe--and our nation owes-- a personal debt of gratitude to Dr. Duval-Flynn, Mary White Ovington and countless other leaders and members of the NAACP. As W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in his first editorial page of The Crisis, in 1910, that voice of the NAACP “will stand for the right of men, irrespective of color or race, for the highest ideals of American democracy, and for the reasonable but earnest and persistent attempt to gain these rights and realize these ideals.” Dr. Duval-Flynn has continued that tradition. I am proud to know and work with this remarkable leader, Dr. Joan Duval-Flynn, and with the NAACP who gave us leaders such as Dr. Joan Duval-Flynn.

Founded on February 12, 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. It has worked successfully with allies of all races who believe in, and stand for, the principles of civil rights on which the organization was founded.

The NAACP’s legacy includes historic events as well as distinguished leaders, such as W.E.B. Dubois and other civil rights luminaries such Rosa Parks, Medgar Evers, and Thurgood Marshall, who served as special counsel for the NAACP when he argued the historic U.S. Supreme Court case of Brown V. Board of Education, a landmark victory for equality that outlawed segregation in schools.

Our obligation to African Americans and all Americans is to honor the accomplishments of the past by acting in a substantive manner to improve lives for tomorrow. Thank you, NAACP, and thank you, Dr. Joan Duval-Flynn."

The month of February is Black History Month. On Saturday, February 16, Congressman Sestak will be meeting with Dr. Flynn to give her a Congressional Citation and to thank her for her work.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.